

Ogston monthly report – February 2013

Species recorded – February = 98 Total for 2013 = 104

The weather during February was a bit of a mixed bag, though mainly quite cold, there were several mild spring-like days mid month with little or no wind. Conversely during this mild period, due to a combination of the lack of wind and some heavy overnight frosts large sections of the reservoir became covered with a layer of thin ice for the first time this winter. There were a few days with mainly light snowfall and occasional light rain but otherwise it was mainly dry, though the reservoir remained more or less full throughout.

The Red-necked Grebe remained until 14th completing a stay of 22 days, beating the previous longest stay of 19 days by a bird in February 1987. The 18th turned out to be an excellent day with both Bewick's and Whooper Swans passing through, and a Glaucous Gull in the roost. Another large herd of Whooper Swans flew through on 20th. Three Pink-footed Geese remained until 15th with one present until 23rd and there were a few records of Shelduck. Other wildfowl of interest included several records of Pintail and the odd Shoveler, Gadwall and Goosanders. A Little Egret passed through on 15th. At least two Water Rails remained throughout but were often elusive. A pair of Oystercatchers, presumably last years successful breeding pair, arrived on 16th and stayed the rest of the month. Single Ringed Plovers flew around calling 17th and 27th but probably due to the high water levels they did not stay. Likewise a Dunlin on 10th passed through without stopping. A few Woodcocks were seen with a maximum of four leaving Carr Wood at dusk on 7th and a Jack Snipe was seen briefly on 8th. The Gull roost was mainly disappointing but did provide a few interesting sightings of Mediterranean, Glaucous, Caspian and Yellow-legged Gulls. Two Dippers were present on the River Amber but most passerines were only present in small numbers. The only record of Brambling this month came from Highoredish where one was present with Yellowhammers on 8th.

Bewick's Swan Three appeared to arrive from the west at approx 10:20 hrs, then circled the reservoir several times before they flew off in a generally easterly direction though they were last seen heading NNE about a mile or so due East of the reservoir at 10:28 hrs.

Whooper Swan 13 (12 adults and a juvenile) circled the reservoir several times before flying off NNW between 12:15 and 12:40 hrs on 18th. A herd of 35 flew NNW between 10:25 and 10:30 hrs on 20th.

Pink-footed Goose The three birds from January were present until at least 15th with one remaining until 23rd.

Greylag Goose Maximum count of 47 on 3rd and 4th.

Shelduck One was present on 9th, on 20th one was present all morning and four were present during the afternoon.

Mandarin A pair flew through on 3rd and a pair on Milltown Inlet on 17th.

Wigeon Small numbers irregularly present, with a maximum of eight on 7th and 8th.

Gadwall In contrast with last months record breaking numbers the only records were of two drakes and a female on 19th, a pair on 25th and a drake on 28th.

Pintail A drake present on 2nd and up to five present on 19th (two drakes on the ice early morning and a drake with two females seen later). Four (two pairs) on 20th.

Shoveler A pair on 16th.

Pochard Maximum count of 37 on 3rd.

Tufted Duck Maximum count of 59 on 17th.

Aythya hybrid What was presumed to be the regularly returning drake Tufted Duck X Pochard hybrid was present on 23rd and 27th.

Goldeneye Present daily with a maximum of 12 on 17th.

Goosander One female on 13th, three flew NW on 15th, one on 16th, one on 20th – 22nd and two on 23rd.

Ruddy Duck The pair were present until at least 26th.

Little Egret One flew through heading NW at 10:15 hrs on 15th.

Red-necked Grebe The adult remained until 14th, a total stay of 22 days, beating the previous longest stay of nineteen days by a bird in Feb 1987.

Buzzard Maximum count of 11 on 28th.

Peregrine One on 16th was the only record.

Water Rail At least two present all month but elusive at times.

Oystercatcher two present daily from 16th onwards, presumably last years breeding pair.

Ringed Plover One calling in thick fog on 17th and one flew around calling during the evening of 27th.

Dunlin One flew through on 10th.

Jack Snipe One on 8th.

Woodcock Four seen emerging from Carr Wood at dusk on 7th, and singles over the Fishermans (southern) car park at dusk on both 19th and 21st.

Mediterranean Gull Two adults were in the roost on 3rd, and one adult on 5th.

Common Gull At least 62 flew E on 11th.

Lesser Black-backed Gull On 16th c160 roosted. On 17th the Dutch colour-ringed female that visited Ogston last year was present, standing on the ice.

Yellow-legged Gull Single 1stW birds present on 11th and 26th and one 2ndW in the roost on 28th.

Caspian Gull A near adult in the roost on 3rd and 4th, one 1stW on 9th/10th, and another 1stW on 19th. One hybrid Caspian type on 9th and an adult that was probably a hybrid on 23rd.

Glaucous Gull A juvenile in the roost on 18th and 19th.

Kingfisher One –two seen on several days most often in the Carr Pond area.

Raven Seen fairly regularly with maximum of six on 11th.

Dipper Two present on the river on 9th.

Tree Sparrow Up to five around feeders behind the dam.

Chaffinch c40 at Highoredish on 8th.

Brambling One with Chaffinches and Yellowhammers at Highoredish on 8th.

Siskin Small numbers present all month.

Linnet A flock of 15 flew N on 28th.

Yellowhammer c25 at Highoredish on 8th.